

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

- [1] (Original) A thickening composition characterized in that the thickening composition comprises a xanthan gum in which a potassium salt is attached to a powder surface of the xanthan gum.
- [2] (Original) The thickening composition according to claim 1, characterized in that the method of attachment comprises the steps of spraying a potassium salt solution to the xanthan gum, and thereafter fluidizing and drying the sprayed xanthan gum.
- [3] (Original) The thickening composition according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the potassium salt is attached to the xanthan gum, in an amount of 0.5 parts by weight or more and 7 parts by weight or less, based on 100 parts by weight of the xanthan gum.
- [4] (Currently amended) The thickening composition according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, characterized in that when the potassium salt-attached xanthan gum as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 is added in an amount of 1 part by weight based on 99 parts by weight of ion-exchanged water at 20°C, the xanthan gum is dispersed or dissolved without forming a lumpy mass, to reach 90% or more of a peak viscosity at 2 minutes after the addition.
- [5] (Currently amended) Foodstuff characterized in that the foodstuff comprise the thickening composition as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1.